

South Puget Forest Land Planning

Eatonville

Stakeholder Informal Meeting, June 21, 2005

Summary of Input

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is moving forward with its planning effort for forested state trust lands in the South Puget planning unit, which generally includes state trust ownerships throughout the greater central Puget Sound region— the I-90 corridor including Tiger Mountain, the McDonald Ridge /Grass Mountain area, the Elbe /Tahoma area, and the Kitsap Peninsula including Green Mountain and the Tahuya and Sherwood forests.

Information gathered from this and subsequent public meetings and other input will assist DNR in developing management strategies specifically for these areas. Following are comments / ideas about three main subject areas gathered at the Eatonville stakeholder meeting attended by representatives of many recreation and environmental groups, trust beneficiaries, and forest products industries.

Public Safety, Access, and Abuse

- DNR may be confronted with limiting public use as the public asks for more diverse motorized and non-motorized recreation.
- There is no access fee for helping manage visitor volumes.
- Public users are accessing Hancock land through DNR land because there are not enough gates and some gates are left open.
- There is not a state airstrip built on DNR land near the town of Ashford for emergencies, fire training, and recreational fliers.
- The snow park parking lot is too small for current and predicted future use.
- The bridge on the 1 Road is the only vehicular access point for the Tahoma State Forest and there is no emergency plan in place if the bridge is destroyed.
- There are different desirable recreation access routes in the summer and winter.
- There is a proposed rail to trail project between Elbe and Ashford that would go across DNR lands.
- People are accessing high hut and other ski huts from roads, when they are supposed to be hiking access only.
- The non-motorized trail system is too small and the motorized system is too large.
- There is not vehicle security or enforcement to protect cars at the Forest Serve 72 Road.
- Motorized vehicles close to ski huts causes vandalism to the huts.

Habitat and Forest Management

- There is an old logging camp south of the Nisqually that needs to be located and documented.
- There is concern about the view corridor near Sahara Creek Campground.
- Interest in seeing DNR managed forest lands continue in active forest management.
- The South Slope of the Elbe Hills is steep and may be geologically unstable..
- The old road that goes down into Beaver Creek Wetland is not a formal footpath.
- Environmental education on the Beaver Creek Wetland is not taking place.
- People who maintain the ski huts are getting flat tires on DNR roads because the roads aren't graded enough.
- Some timber stands on the ski trail system near the ski huts are hard to ski through due to dense stocking levels.

- There are no information kiosks with information about DNR and other organizations that are in the area.
- No signs along SR706 to educate the public on DNR's management practices.
- The area has inadequate law enforcement.

Recreation

- Elbe Hills and Tahoma State Forests lack specific maps for recreation use.
- The Sahara Creek Trailhead and horse trails in the Elbe Hills are valued for their recreational opportunities.
- The public wants more diverse recreational opportunities, both motorized and non-motorized.
- The Tahoma State Forest has year-around non-motorized recreational activities including skiing, snowshoeing, and mountain biking that are valued.
- The snow park off the 92 Road lacks upgrades including a loop system with beginner trails.
- Old Railroad grades make good locations for developed trails.
- There is not a walk-in campground at Memorial Park.
- The ORV trailhead and campground should be moved to the end of Stoner Road.
- DNR is not following the National Park Service Gateway Initiative and provision of visitor services.
- Near state land is a proposed park behind the Ashford fire station, which may influence visitor numbers to state lands in the area.
- The East Creek area should stay as a non-motorized biker/hiker recreation area
- More ski huts should be built on the trail system.
- There are no ski huts overlooking Anderson Lake.
- Summer bicyclists want to continue using the Tahoma State Forest ski trail system.